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Redevelopment Board Minutes 10/04/2010

DRAFT Minutes of Monday, October 4, 2010
Arlington Redevelopment Board
Second Floor Conference Room, Town Hall Annex
Approved 10-25-10

Members Present:
Roland Chaput
Bruce Fitzsimmons
Chris Loreti, Chairman
Ed Tsoi
Andrew West

Several members of the public were also present.

The meeting was called to order at 7:03pm. Mr. Loreti then opened the continued hearing for 30-50 Mill Street. Rick Dickason and architect Brian O'Connor represented the applicant. Mr. Loreti then asked Board members for any additional traffic issues to refer to the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC). After discussion, it was decided that William Scully's firm MS Transportation Systems/New England Engineering Group New England could prepare a synchro simulation, rather than another consulting firm doing it.

Mr. Loreti then turned to the issue of the massing of the buildings. Mr. Dickason presented slides to show changes made to address this concern. The applicant and the Board also discussed the retaining wall and pavilion park. The shadow study was also presented for the revised roof line. The Board agreed that this was the right design direction.

Returning to circulation and the site plan, Mr. Loreti observed that there was an entryway for cars, but no sense of a front door. He asked how T-riders or bike commuters would enter the building without a car. Mr. O'Connor then showed entry points into the building on the plan.

The Board agreed that a conference call between the Chairs of the School Committee, Conservation Commission, Redevelopment Board and the Director would allow for efficient collaboration on applying for permits to allow the improvements the applicant intends to make on the strip of Town-owned land where unwanted asphalt would be removed.

A possible connection to the bikepath in the northwest corner of the site was requested by Mr. West, but the applicant commented that this was not practical because there are significant and desirable trees growing in that area that they wished to keep.

Mr. West asked if the building would be LEED certified. The applicant said that it would probably meet LEED, but that certification was too expensive. Mr. Chaput asked about solar panels. The cost is too great and payback too long without grants, the applicant replied.

Mr. Loreti then asked for public comment. Beth Ann Friedman commented that she liked the new design, that it was interesting, and seemed less massive. She asked for clarification on the view shown of the retaining wall, and clarification was given.

Mr. Fitzsimmons noted that at a prior meeting a member of the public had asked if a 7-11 store could go into the retail space. He opined that the way to make this space special was to pursue something unique, whether for food or beverage, ice cream, or a historical use. Mr. Fitzsimmons further commented that Post Office Square is not just another place to get soda pop. He pressed the applicant to ensure that both the kiosk and the retail building speak to the lifestyle of people using the bikepath, to distinguish it from other places.

Mr. Loreti and Ms. Winstanley O'Connor then turned to procedural matters, including the need for a legal notice for a Special Permit for parking. It was also noted that Mr. Tsoi would need to complete a Mullin Rule form for his scheduled absence from the October 25 continued hearing.

Mr. Fitzsimmons then moved to continue the hearing to October 25 at 8PM. Mr. Chaput seconded and all voted in favor.

At this point Mr. Chaput left the meeting.

The Board and Ms. Kowalski then discussed long-range planning, and the need for a Comprehensive Master Plan. After discussion it was agreed that Ms. Kowalski would provide information on approaches to conducting a Master Plan process without financial support, and information on Board members' responsibilities.

The Board then discussed issues that may warrant consideration as zoning bylaw amendments. These included grandfathering of lots, removing wireless communications from EDR, adopting revisions to the inland wetland zoning overlay map, signs in front yards on houses in business districts, reducing parking if Transportation Demand Management commitments are made, allowing cemetery use at Cooke's Hollow, and mixed use. Staff would provide additional information, photos, and it was agreed that Master Plan and zoning amendments would be on future agendas and the Tracking Report so the Board may consider them in more detail.

Mr. West then moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Fitzsimmons. The meeting was adjourned at 10:37pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Kowalski
Secretary ex Officio